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ABSTRACT

The primary loyalty of the chief executive officer is to the board of education, a group of lay people elected to represent the school's clients. Because accountability is to laymen rather than to senior professionals, chief executive officers must play a heavy role in educating them about education and in generating policy recommendations for their consideration. The essential competencies for the position fall into three domains: the conceptual and substantive, the human and political, and the technical and managerial. These competencies can be developed by professionalization, which can be pursued by formal preparation, inservice education, and applied research and development. Also professional organizations can develop mechanisms for mutual support and to monitor the performance of fellow professionals; establish a code of ethics on which there is consensus among the members; and establish an agency through which chief executive officers can have input to the development of policy at the provincial level. Professionalization also requires that executives commit themselves personally to professional development by managing time to allow for reading, studying, and thinking. (MLF)

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THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER IN EDUCATION

by

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Presented to the Saskatchewan Association of
Locally Employed Administrators, Directors of Education, and Superintendents of Schools

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THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER IN EDUCATION

I am very pleased that you have given me this opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. I had some grave concerns about accepting your invitation when Ray first invited me because, as you know, this time of year is a particularly heavy one for speaking engagements; my lead time for this assignment was rather short, and you are not the type of audience for which one can risk being ill prepared. However, the chance to speak to you in the context of your purposes at this meeting is an opportunity which only a fool would decline. So I accepted and I'm happy I did so. I'm happy because I understand this is the first special professional development meeting that LEADS has held, and it is unquestionably an honor to speak at it. I am happy because the purpose of this meeting -- to enhance the professional development of locally employed superintendents and directors of education in the province -- is of crucial importance, not only directly to all of you here, but also indirectly to the advancement of education in Saskatchewan (a mission that is critical to every citizen). And I am happy because the professionalization of educational administration has been my primary career commitment since entering this field more than a decade ago and, by inviting me here, you have given me an opportunity to further pursue that interest. So I have a stake in trying to meet my own expectations as well as yours in my remarks this afternoon.

I have been asked to address the topic, "The Role of the Chief Executive Officer in Education." In tackling this subject, I shall focus on three questions. First, I shall try to define just what the distinctive role of the chief executive officer is. Secondly, I shall explore what the chief executive officer must know and be able to do in performing his functions. And finally, I shall discuss some approaches

that can help the chief executive officer cope with his complex duties. I hope to be reasonably practical in my comments, because they derive largely from direct experience with many chief executive officers in several Canadian provinces and the United States, as well as from my own joys and tribulations as an administrator in various educational organizations -- including the College of Education at the University of Saskatchewan. My greatest professional pleasures over the years have resulted from my associations with truly competent educational leaders, and I think the main reason for my enjoyment of these associations is that I find my in-basket filled with many of the same kinds of challenges that you must face. So I come to you not as a parachutist from the ivory tower, but as a kindred spirit. And I know from previous experience that, as we work together to improve educational leadership in this province during the years to come, I will gain more from my association with you than you will from me. Nevertheless, at least for this afternoon, I get the first word.

What is the Distinctive Role of the Chief Executive Officer in Education?

During my years in Ontario, I had a unique opportunity to witness and participate in the evolution of a profession -- the profession of educational administration and, more particularly, of "chief executive officership." The province had recently consolidated its school jurisdictions into larger boards of education, with locally employed directors and superintendents and many of them recognized that this change carried with it important new expectations for their performance, but they were unsure of just what these expectations were. I have never been more impressed than I was with the way in which leadership emerged from within their own ranks to guide them through this uncertainty (and I am delighted to see evidence of the same phenomenon here in Saskatchewan). While they drew eclectically upon the insights of

many "outsiders" (including those in universities, in the private sector, and in educational jurisdictions outside the province), by far the most productive ideas emanated from their own membership. This was facilitated by their establishment of the Ontario Association of Education Administrative Officials as a strong professional association, the creation of the Ontario Council for Leadership in Educational Administration as a uniquely successful professional development agency, and the development of graduate programs at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education designed to meet the particular needs of locally employed practitioners of educational administration. During this evolutionary period, several conferences on the chief executive officer in education were mounted, and the best presentations on this subject were invariably those offered by leaders within the profession itself. We in Saskatchewan can learn much from their experience, both good and bad; and I expect that we will come to our own conceptualization of the role, one that is uniquely appropriate to the context of this province.

In one such paper, Em Lavender (who is now Director in the Halton Board of Education, one of the best school systems in the country) defined the role of the chief executive officer as follows:

- (a) To keep the board, and the staff as required, informed of new ideas and progress in the field of education, particularly as they affect current operation.
- (b) To recommend to the board measures consonant with the health, development, and efficiency of the program, bearing in mind the educational goals of the students.
- (c) To participate in the policy-making functions of the board by analyzing problems and making policy statements for the board to consider (and to accept, modify or reject).
- (d) To implement board policy by every device of leadership.
- (e) To report to the board the effectiveness of its policies and programs.
- (f) To be responsible to the board for the performance of duties

of all staff employed by the board including all business and academic officers.

- (g) To perform all other duties as the chief executive officer of the board in the fields of education and business and maintain the system under the board's jurisdiction in efficient and progressive operation.¹

Implicit throughout that job definition is the view that the primary loyalty of the chief executive officer is to his board.

It is this loyalty that represents the essential distinctiveness of "chief executive officership" which you must recognize as locally employed educational administrators. You are not one of a cohort of individuals who are all identically accountable to a senior officer at the provincial level. Rather, you are alone (aside from the collegial relations that you share through various professional associations, particularly LEADS); you are the only chief executive officer in your school system, for there can be but one. As such, you are responsible; there is no "big daddy" in Regina to whom you can refer your questions and "bump" your problems. And your primary accountability is not to a single more senior fellow professional who may have "sat in your chair" at one time; your accountability is to a group of lay people elected to represent your clients.

These factors have an immense impact upon the nature of your role. For example, you are the manager of a complex organization responsible for the provision of educational services. Like all managers you need assistance, but your main source of assistance is not in a superior office outside your jurisdiction which can relieve you of some of the weight of ultimate managerial authority; rather, your main source of assistance is in subordinate positions within your own system -- positions which are subject to your supervision, thus placing the full weight of ultimate managerial authority upon your shoulders. Thus, you must build and captain your own

support team; you are not just a member of someone else's support team.

Because your accountability is to laymen rather than to a senior professional, you must play a heavy role in educating them about education and in generating policy recommendations or alternatives for their consideration. This means that you must be the educational opinion leader in your community. You must be familiar with, and have well thought through positions on, the wide variety of issues that impinge upon educational policies and programs at any given time in this province, and in the country at large; for example, you must be able to comment knowledgeably and convincingly about such issues as declining enrolments and financial retrenchment at all levels of education, teacher supply and university "over-production" generally, program concerns such as core curricula and "the basics," bilingualism and multi-culturalism, inter-regional disparities and federal involvement in education, demography and population distribution, separate schools and the "Quebec question," native self-determinism and women's rights, the role of the profession in teacher education and certification, the purposes of education and the goals of schooling, standards and testing in education, school law and the legal rights of various participants in education, and numerous other matters of current educational significance.

Moreover, as the public becomes accustomed to your role as the community's opinion leader in the area of education, it will look to you increasingly for intellectual leadership in other matters of social significance both locally and nationally; you will be expected to articulate clear and firm positions on such issues as local industrial development, residential zoning, city planning, national unity, international trade and commerce, the correction of our economic "tailspin," the conservation of energy, the protection of our ecological environment, and countless other matters that are of concern to the educated citizenry in your communities. To put it bluntly, the chief executive officer cannot be

satisfied with simply running his school system; he must be taking it somewhere, and he must be able to explain where and why he is taking it. And he must know much more than education, for as a chief executive officer he will be expected (legitimately) to provide ideational leadership for the community in realms far beyond that of the schools.

In this role, the chief executive officer is, of course, highly visible and very vulnerable. Jim Singleton, who until his recent retirement was acknowledged as the leader among Ontario directors of education, said of your role:

Chief executive officers are not only accountable but frequently the prime target for most criticism against education. In an age of teacher and student militancy in which demands seem to be non-negotiable but officials are, the role of the chief executive officer as a prime target of teachers, press, public, etc., has to be watched closely. This process is an outcome of the general decline of acceptance of the authority of the expert in society but specifically relates to the fact that the director often appears to be an impediment in the way of special pressure groups having their own way.²

If you don't have a strong stomach and a thick skin, if you don't relish the visibility and thrive on the vulnerability of "chief executive officership," you are in the wrong job.

Because your accountability is to a group rather than to an individual, you must be extremely skilful in practical politics and group dynamics -- in the analysis of power, in the management of conflict, and in the generation of consensus. The chief executive officer must be very much a politician at the local level because, unless you want to relinquish your responsibility for educational leadership and are satisfied simply to do whatever your board tells you, you must be at least as successful a practitioner of the art of politics as are the elected politicians on the board to which you are accountable. Moreover, you must also be politically adept at the provincial level; since you are not employees of the provincial Department of Education, but must nevertheless implement provincial policy that falls into the Department's jurisdiction,

you must find ways whereby you can, as a group if not individually, have direct and meaningful input to the development of departmental policy, regulations, and guidelines -- unless, again, you are willing to let someone else take over leadership for the school system under your authority.

To summarize, the chief executive officer must be manager, leader, spokesman, statesman, target, and politician. And in addition to all of this, he must be an educator. I stress this last point because there are some (myself among them at one time) who have held the view that a good executive can effectively administer any of several different kinds of enterprises, including school systems. I don't believe that any more. The nature of the educational process, the indicators of its performance, and the criteria by which it can be judged are sufficiently different from those of business, military, or other organizations that those charged with its leadership must be immersed in its milieu before they can understand how to move the organizations in which it takes place.

What Must the Chief Executive Officer Know and Be Able to Do?³

What, then, are the skills and knowledge that the chief executive officer must possess in order to play this multifarious role? I believe that his essential competencies fall into three domains: the conceptual and substantive, the human and political, and the technical and managerial -- so let me outline each of them briefly.

Conceptual and substantive. The conceptual domain of administrative skills has been well defined by Abbott:

If an individual possesses conceptual skills, he has developed the ability to apply information and concepts to practice. This involves the ability to see the organization as a whole and to understand how various parts of the organization relate to and affect each other, which requires diagnosis and analysis. Conceptual skills refer to the ability to discern meaning in and to establish relationships among events and bits of information that at first glance would appear to be discrete and unrelated.⁴

In this domain, then, the chief executive officer must possess basic intelligence. He must have an ability to generalize, to see the broad picture, to envision the future (or alternative futures), and to think in "systems" terms. He must be able to reason both inductively and deductively; to analyze and synthesize; to foresee, to inquire, and to assess. He must be able to translate thought into action. And perhaps above all, he must be able to tolerate ambiguity.

In addition to these skills of an essentially conceptual nature, the chief executive officer requires substantive competencies of a more concrete type. Because he is responsible for an educational organization, he must understand both education and organizations. In the educational domain, he must possess current knowledge about learning theory, teacher behaviour, curriculum development, and child growth. He must also comprehend the essential characteristics of, and distinctions among, major groups of subjects. And he must be familiar with educational technology. In the organizational domain, he must understand organizational theory and the basic concepts associated with leadership, decision making, formal and informal organizations, bureaucracy, professionalism, administrative and supervisory behaviour, systems theory, policy science, and numerous other constructs deriving primarily from the social sciences. In essence, he must have wisdom and be capable of good judgement; and he must have knowledge and be capable of obtaining and assessing information.

Human and political. With respect to human relations competencies, the chief executive officer must be able to clarify and understand varying value systems, and he must be able to manage and resolve conflicts. He must be capable of empathizing with others, and of practising effective group dynamics. He must have the skill to inspire confidence, to support, to steer, and to effect professional and personal growth in others; he must be

able to motivate, to stimulate, and to challenge. In sum, he requires the ability to recognize and meet the individual needs of others while at the same time tapping their full potential to contribute to the achievement of his school system's objectives. Toward this end, he should be familiar with organization development and other group-based, problem-solving approaches to educational administration.

In his relationships with people, he must also possess skills of a more political type. As I mentioned earlier, he must understand, be able to analyze, and exploit power structures both within his organization and external to it. He must be skilful at bargaining, at compromising, and at manipulating various kinds of "trade-offs." He must know how to build consensus, and when to use confrontation. He must be fully familiar with the demands and sanctions that confront him, and he must recognize and be willing to use the strategies, resources, and other tools (or "chips") that he controls with which to respond to these demands. Today's chief executive officer faces a "jaundiced" society that questions his professional expertise, a politically active community that seeks to control his school system, and an increasingly militant staff whose demands are frequently in direct opposition to the managerial accountability his board of education expects of him. Within this setting, political skills are essential. In sum, then, the chief executive officer in dealing with people must be both humanly aware and "street smart."

Technical and managerial. Finally, there are competencies of a much more technical, less esoteric nature that today's chief executive officer requires. He must know the "nuts and bolts" of the legal framework within which he operates, of the bureaucratic structure and regulations which he must administer, and of the rights and responsibilities of various participants with whom he interacts -- including his own. He must have skills

in the areas of fiscal accounting, contracting, purchasing, inventory maintenance, flexible modular scheduling, and electronic data processing. He must be able to communicate effectively through all available media. He must understand the basics of personnel administration and of various kinds of transportation and information systems. And he should know something about architecture, engineering, and mechanics.

In addition to these diverse technical skills, he must be competent in the technologies of management. He should be familiar with and capable of applying program budgeting systems, management by objectives, information technology, and such network planning tools as the program evaluation and review technique and the critical path method. He must be knowledgeable in the areas of assessment technology and demographic planning. He must be able to determine needs, to set objectives, to organize and deploy staff and other resources, to divide labour and delegate responsibility, to establish authority and communication channels, to supervise and monitor activities, and to interpret and report results. In essence, he must be a managerial technician.

While this long list of competencies may sound like a rather tall order, I have restricted it only to those elements that are capable of development through training and experience. There is another category of traits that is even more important than those I have mentioned. This category does not lend itself well to training, because it concerns elements of the chief executive officer's character; because it can be neither bought nor learned, we would each do well to look within ourselves for it -- and if we find ourselves wanting, then we should perhaps reconsider our career aspirations in educational administration. I refer to those qualities which go under the general name of leadership.

Many of us have read and written⁵ about leadership from a theoretical point of view. But one of the best definitions I have seen was presented by

Jim Singleton in a discussion paper he wrote about "the chief executive officer" in education. Let me read you a few of his comments:

The leader is a person who has a vision of the possibility of education and his or her sharing of that vision with others is the act of leadership. It is true there are visions and nightmares and these spell the difference between good and bad leaders. Therefore in choosing leaders, not only the fact of the vision but its quality is germane.

The main characteristics of good leaders in education are that they have ideas and convictions, courage and judgement.

The ideas and convictions arise from several sources. Experience is an excellent stimulator. A director needs to be steeped in educational experience. Books are another source of widening horizons. The extent to which the official has discussed ideas with other persons of a creative or innovative nature and has visited places where such people have come together is an index of his own awareness. Leaders without ideas and visions are dangerous. Leaders with ideas, modified by exposure to other people's ideas, have goals by which they operate.

The chief executive officer needs courage. He has to work with a tough-minded optimism through other people, frequently from a minority position. Like most human endeavours, such an operation is fraught with the dangers of human imperfection (including the director's) and subject to the frustrations of slow and tedious winning of support. Incremental gain is the name of the game in human-oriented activities. In addition, the director must learn to live with the role of risk-taker. Those who risk little, achieve nothing. Some endeavours must fail even for the most astute leader and the acceptance of the risk and ultimate responsibility is part of the role. The risks taken must be calculated and must be over substantive issues which are worth the risk. Careful preparation and good communication must be of paramount importance because the director is a risk-taker not a gambler.

The chief executive officer requires judgement. He has to work with and through people, usually in large groups. A sensitivity to timing and acceptability of ideas and change are essential qualities.

The key to weaving these three characteristics together is the ability to communicate. This requirement in no way implies flamboyance or the "hard sell." However, an ability to explain, to analyze, to synthesize, and to persuade diverse groups is essential.

The question may legitimately be asked at this point whether anyone who has convictions, courage, and judgement, in quantities sufficient to show leadership could be a chief executive officer. Two aspects must be drawn into the above three qualities. The

first is that the leader must have a vision and the vision is about education. Such a vision can only arise in those who have had a background in the possibilities and difficulties of educating children or in those who have made, from a base outside the education process itself, a conscious effort to master the broader aspect of the process. The second is the willingness of those involved, both staff and public, to be led by the leader. Professional staff will only follow when they feel both the integrity of the leader and the depth of his involvement in education.

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It is an observable fact that the most successful leaders apply a variety of styles, each appropriate to the matter at hand. Some problems require the widest possible participation to be successfully resolved and the time and energy to allow this involvement must be found. Other issues must be handled quickly and, necessarily, autocratically if justice is to be done. Each problem involves a different approach and the decision on that approach is an exercise of the judgement quality of the director.⁶

Vision, ideas, convictions, courage, persuasiveness, judgement -- these are the qualities of leadership required of the chief executive officer, as seen by an acknowledged leader among chief executive officers in Canadian education.

There is one other essential dimension of leadership that Singleton didn't address explicitly in his comments. Let me quote from one of the most respected of contemporary American leaders, John Gardner:

Leaders worthy of the name, whether they are university presidents or senators, corporation executives or newspaper editors, school superintendents or governors, contribute to the continuing definition and articulation of the most cherished values of our society. They offer, in short, moral leadership. Leaders have a significant role in creating the state of mind that is the society. They can serve as symbols of the moral unity of the society. They can express the values that hold the society together. Most important, they can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations, carry them above the conflicts that tear a society apart, and unite them in the pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts.⁷

You can lead for awhile on the basis of learned knowledge and skills like those I outlined earlier. You can lead for quite awhile longer if you possess in addition the vision, courage, judgement, and other character traits mentioned by Singleton. But you cannot provide leadership over a sustained period of time without the moral component that Gardner espouses.

Unless your direction touches the basic values of people, they will not commit themselves fully to your guidance on a long-lasting basis. And without that commitment you are lost, for let us never forget that the true test of leadership is followership. If nobody's following you, you aren't leading.

How Can the Chief Executive Officer Cope?

I have not done justice to the qualities required of the chief executive officer. For example, I have neglected such crucial characteristics as integrity, honesty, fairness, flexibility, and a host of others that are equally important. Nevertheless, I hope I have said enough to impress upon you the fact that there is a nobility and uniqueness to "chief executive officership" in education. To perform your role satisfactorily, you must recognize that you represent a distinct profession. You must develop an identity that is different from that of teachers, business managers, or civil servants (although you have some things in common with each of them). Like teachers, you must be, first and foremost, educators; but many of the characteristics of the excellent teacher are not helpful (and may even be a hindrance) to the chief executive officer, and many qualities required by the chief executive officer are not developed through training and experience as a teacher. Like business managers, you must possess a comprehensive repertoire of highly developed administrative skills; but educational organizations, as I mentioned earlier, are fundamentally different from business organizations in a number of ways and the chief executive officer must have thoroughly experienced, in a first-hand manner, the unique elements of teaching and schools. Like civil servants, you are responsible for providing a publicly supported and governed service; but there are major distinctions between the typical orientations of civil servants and those of chief executive officers -- distinctions which Em Lavender has summed up as follows:

the civil servant has a predilection toward "doing things right" whereas the chief executive officer must have a predilection toward "doing right things."⁸ Your role is similar to many others, and identical to none.

The major implication of this fact is that, in order to advance the role of the chief executive officer in education in Saskatchewan and to improve your own performance of that role, you must rely predominantly upon yourselves. In a word, you must professionalize. You must commit yourselves to the advancement of your own specialization and particularization, to the evolution of your professional self-concept both individually and collectively. "Chief executive officership" is different from anything you have done before and from anything others are doing -- and if you are willing to nurture and sustain it, it can be better. If you don't, it may destroy you, and perhaps the educational system for which you are responsible as well; if you do, you may together find challenge, reward, and joy in your occupation beyond anything you have yet experienced. So I would urge you to pursue the professionalization of "chief executive officership" in Saskatchewan education.

There are many ways in which the professionalization of an occupation can be pursued. Let me mention some of them:

1. Probably the most common approach to professionalization is through formal preparation for an occupation. There is a recognized and growing body of knowledge in educational administration and it behooves the chief executive officer to learn it. I do not deny that this province has produced some first-rate educational administrators without the benefit of advanced study in educational administration. Yet, it has been my experience that the best among them are the first to acknowledge and promote the importance of such study, particularly if it is

practically oriented as well as being conceptually sound.

Our universities are endeavouring to provide such programs at the graduate level, and their success will depend upon your support -- by involving yourselves in some cases, by encouraging the prospective leaders under your supervision to enrol, and by giving of your time and talent to help refine the nature and substance of the programs themselves.

2. Secondly, and perhaps more appropriate for those of you who are already chief executive officers, professionalization requires a substantial dose of in-service education. Short-term meetings like this one today can be of some assistance, but a more sustained effort is necessary for true professional development. I believe there is a strong need in this province for an organization like OCLEA in Ontario or the B.C. Council for Leadership in Education in British Columbia, and I and my colleagues at the University of Saskatchewan are planning some activities whereby we can support you in the development of such an organization should you choose to work with us in that connection. I would hope that a sustained series of practical and substantive workshops (not just conferences where you are talked at) could emerge from such an endeavour.
3. Another path to professionalization is through applied research and development focussed upon your occupation itself. While university scholars can help in this regard, professionalization requires that the practitioners themselves contribute to an understanding of their own occupation. You are in a position to examine first-hand the effects of alternative solutions you may design for problems you confront, and as professionals you have an obligation to take advantage of this opportunity. Each of you

should be an applied researcher and developer in his own jurisdiction. Moreover, you have a responsibility to analyze the results of your efforts as chief executive officers, and to share these results with your colleagues in other jurisdictions. This means that you must be willing to speak at conferences of chief executive officers and to write for journals and other publications in your field. No outsider, regardless of his scholarly objectivity, has the credibility among chief executive officers that you have yourselves; you must reaffirm this credibility and exploit it by contributing personally to the advancement of your profession beyond the boundaries of your own school system.

4. Another approach you should take to the advancement of your profession is to become directly involved in the entry of newcomers to it. You should play a part in the recruitment and selection of chief executive officers throughout the province, especially by developing and communicating your collective views on the qualifications that should be sought and the criteria that should be employed in identifying prospective chief executive officers; if you are successful in this, you will increasingly find yourselves called upon to advise boards of education when they are searching for new chief executive officers. You should also be directly involved in the training and "licensing" of chief executive officers; you should have a major say in determining both the pre-service and in-service preparation required for "chief executive officership" and many of you should participate personally in the delivery of these experiences. And you should be active in the process of inducting and socializing new recruits

"chief executive officership"; you should provide internship and intervisitation experiences for prospective chief executive officers, and you should inaugurate induction seminars for those newly appointed to the role.

5. You should, through your professional organization, insist upon a mechanism whereby you can monitor the performance of your fellow professionals, both as a group and as individual practitioners; it is essential to the maintenance and advancement of your profession that you play a direct role in protecting the competent and in helping or removing the incompetent among you.
6. Related to this, you should develop mechanisms for mutual support, so that when one of your colleagues is encountering difficulties he can turn to his fellow professionals for advice and support; I mentioned earlier that "chief executive officership" is a lonely occupation, and it is necessary that the strain of this loneliness be reduced by the knowledge that there are others in the same position upon whose counsel and sustenance one can rely in times of adversity.
7. Another hallmark of a profession is the establishment of a code of ethics on which there is consensus among the members. Because of your ultimate authority, the welfare of thousands of teachers, hundreds of staff members, and your board and the general public that they represent depends to a large extent on the quality of your competence, your values, and your integrity. The burden of this responsibility is great, and your ability to bear it will be helped by the generation of mores, standards, and creeds which you can agree to as a group for the guidance of individual members in performing their duties. Such a code of ethics can also provide

some protection to your clients and subordinates against arbitrary or wilful misuse of authority by individual members of your profession.

8. It is also essential to a profession that it have direct and strong input to the development of policy affecting the work of its practitioners. You can have this input at the local level almost by definition, since you are the chief executive officer of a board which should look to you for advice on policy alternatives. But you should also have this input at the provincial level; thus, you must establish an agency through which you can speak with a clear and unified voice within the major decision-making arenas in Regina. And this voice must have the backing of all of you, collectively, so that it is powerful enough that departmental decision makers cannot afford to ignore it.
9. And finally, as individual professionals you need to commit yourselves personally to your own professional development. You must make time to read, to study, to think, to plan, to travel, to confer, to teach, to write, and to speak in the interest of your own professional development and that of your colleagues. The qualities of the chief executive officer which I discussed earlier cannot be developed simply by sitting in your office and responding to the various items that find their way into your in-basket. I have no doubt that each of you could completely fill six or seven working days every week with matters that are placed before you for action. To allow this to happen, however, is the surest way to guarantee a lack of educational leadership and a decline of professionalization on your part. The most common rejoinder to this view, of course, is that one would love to engage

in activities like thinking and travelling and writing, but there simply aren't enough hours in the day to permit it. This rejoinder has intrigued me for years, and on the basis of a good bit of personal experience and observation, I have concluded that it is a cop out. There is an art to time management on the part of the executive, and this art is a basic ingredient in the profession of "chief executive officership." It involves a number of skills that can be learned -- including those of prioritizing, sequencing, and delegating (Singleton calls delegation "a conscious trade of risk for time"⁹). There are many "tricks of the trade" that can be learned in this regard, and a few people who are experts at teaching them; "time management" might be a good topic for one of the professional development workshops that I mentioned earlier.

These, then, are ways in which I believe your ability to cope can be enhanced through the professionalization of "chief executive officership."

I hope it is obvious to you that a strong professional association, like LEADS, is crucial to the pursuit of these various paths to professionalization. Even the last one that I mentioned, which is individualized in nature, requires the support of a professional association of those engaged in such individualized pursuits. Through a strong professional association, you can mount professional development workshops, you can issue publications that carry the writings of your own members and of others speaking directly to the interests of your membership, you can bring pressure to bear in political circles to ensure that the unified voice of your profession is heard, you can provide a mechanism through which universities and others (including various provincial, national, and international agencies) can "tap" your expertise (and vice versa), you can generate and endorse a code of ethics

to guide your behaviour, and you can press for conditions of work that are supportive of your professional aspirations (including arrangements for sabbatical leaves, travel, book and journal allowances, job security, termination policies and procedures, etc.). You have the potential to build such a professional association; it exists here, today, in this room. I sincerely hope that you will actively pursue that potential.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by acknowledging that there are numerous important aspects of the role of the chief executive officer in education that I have neglected in this presentation. For example, I have ignored the relationship between the chief executive officer and the chairman and members of his board; thus, I have not talked about the grey area that exists between policy and administration, an area that has accounted for the demise of several chief executive officers. I have not said enough about the relationship between the chief executive officer and the provincial Department of Education; the locally employed administrator has considerable autonomy from the Department, and greater decentralization is inevitable, which will lead to increased autonomy; this will unavoidably result in some tension and misunderstanding between the two levels and efforts must be made to reduce this tension and misunderstanding through joint consultation privately and mutual loyalty publically; it is important that you, as chief executive officers, do not fall into the habit of using the Department as a convenient scapegoat for your own shortcomings in courage, knowledge, or effectiveness. I have also under-emphasized the relationship between the chief executive officer and his staff; in order to maintain credibility with the board to which he is accountable, the administrator must spend enough time with his staff in the schools to know with confidence what is going on out there; if he does

so, the other side of this coin is that his potential to lead the staff should be enhanced by their recognition that his primary accountability is not to a remote bureaucracy in the provincial capitol, but rather to elected representatives of the public in his jurisdiction -- board members who are close to the parents of students with whom the staff members interact daily. And there are many other aspects of the chief executive officer's role that I have not addressed.

But each of these topics would require a full presentation of its own in order to do it justice, and you may wish to pursue some of them in subsequent meetings. For the purpose of this meeting, I have placed my emphasis on the relationship between the chief executive officer and his fellow locally employed educational administrators. This is the context within which the chief executive officer can express his most deep-felt views, independently of any obligation he has to his board, his staff, or the Department of Education. This is the context within which the necessary professionalization of the chief executive officership can be pursued. And this is the context within which your organization, LEADS, can realize its full potential as an association committed to the recognition and advancement of "chief executive officership" as an occupation with unique needs, distinct identity, and immense opportunity to provide inspired leadership for Saskatchewan education. I would urge you to take up this challenge, and I hope that, in so doing, you will realize that I and my colleagues in the College of Education stand ready to fully support your efforts. I wish you good luck, much success, and great joy in your quest.

References

¹E.S. Lavender, "A View of the Role of the Supervisory Officer as Seen in the Local Jurisdiction with Focus on the Chief Executive Officer" (unpublished paper prepared for OAEAO supervisory officers' workshops, 1974), p. 5.

²J.W. Singleton, "The Chief Executive Officer" (unpublished paper prepared for OAEAO, 1974), p. 2.

³The first part of this section is adapted from: Robin H. Farquhar, "Can the University Train School Principals?" OCLEA, No. 10 (June, 1977), pp. 13-17.

⁴Max G. Abbott, "Principal Performance: A Synthesis," Performance Objectives for Principals: Concepts and Instruments, Eds. Jack A. Culbertson, Curtis Henson, and Ruel Morrison (Berkeley: McCutchan, 1974), p. 200.

⁵See, for example: Robin H. Farquhar, "The Nature of Leadership," Leadership 2000: Focus on the Future (Regina: Phi Delta Kappa, 1977), pp. 17-36.

⁶Singleton, op. cit., pp. 3-6.

⁷John Gardner in his final report as President of the Carnegie Corporation; quoted in: Charles E. Brown, "Needed: Relevant Preparation Programs for Educational Administrators," trend, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Fall, 1964), p. 11.

⁸Lavender, op. cit., p. 9.

⁹Singleton, op. cit., p. 9.